

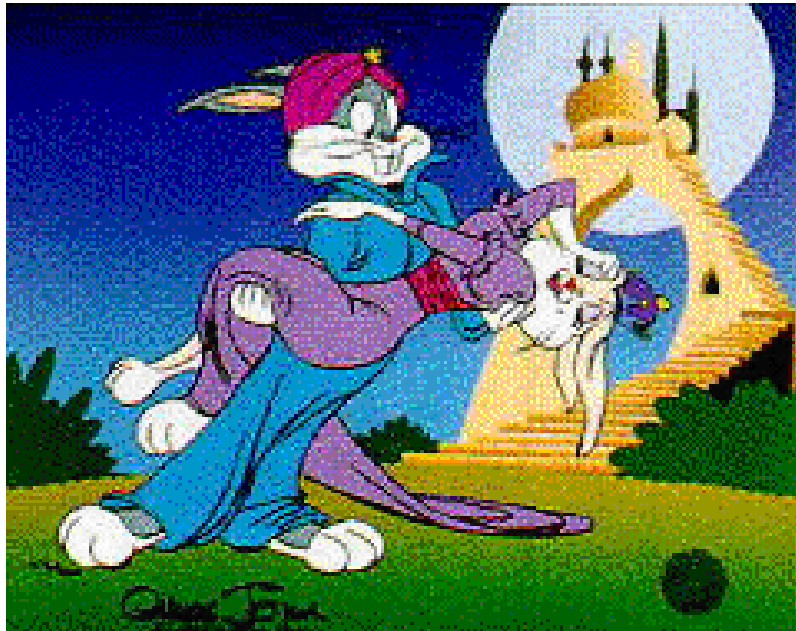
Reunion Briefing

“Honey, I’m Home!”



And What A Great Time It Will Be!

Why Learn About Reunion?



- ✓ Changes Cause Stress
- ✓ Everyone is Affected
- ✓ Emotions May Become Tense After a Few Days

Learning About Reunion Can
Make Everyone Happier and
More Relaxed

Why Is Talking About Reunion Important?

- ✓ Reunion is more than just “Coming Home”
- ✓ Reunion is that period of adjustment following the return of a soldier from deployment
- ✓ Reunion is a very important part of the deployment cycle
- ✓ Research has shown that reunion homecomings are more stressful than the initial predeployment and deployment phases

Tonight's Objectives

- ✓ Establish Realistic Expectations about Reunion
- ✓ Recognize Symptoms of Stress
- ✓ Identify Helpful and Reliable Sources of Assistance

Objectives

Family Members at Home Will:

- ✓ Retain a Sense of Accomplishment
- ✓ Understand the Servicemember's Experiences and Homecoming "Point of View"
- ✓ Integrate Returnee into Their Daily Lives with Minimal Stress
- ✓ Anticipate a Change in Decision Making Behavior
- ✓ Complete Unfinished Personal Business Created by the Separation

Our Goal

The Goal of the reunion program is to help limit damage caused by the long separation, ease the strain of reunion, and preserve whatever personal gains the family may have experienced.

ANTICIPATION OF REUNION

- ✓ What is your partner going through right now in anticipation of reunion?
- ✓ What are you going through right now in anticipation of reunion
- ✓ What are your children going through right now in anticipation of reunion

HOW DO YOU PREPARE FOR
A HAPPY REUNION?

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A HAPPY REUNION

✓ SPOUSES MAY THINK

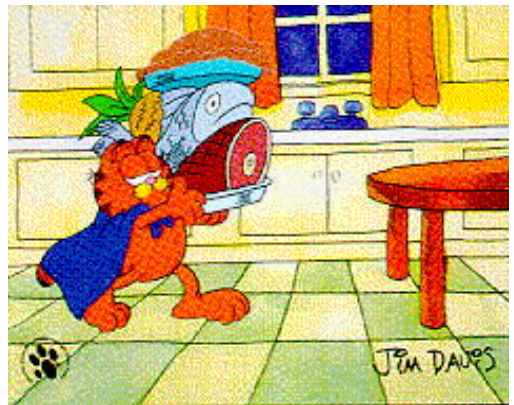
- ✕ How has my spouse changed?
- ✕ Have I made good decisions about our money?
- ✕ Did I do okay with the children?
- ✕ Will I have to stop seeing my friends so much?
- ✕ Will we still have thing to talk about?

REMEMBER, IT'S NATURAL TO
FEEL ANXIOUS AS WELL AS
EXCITED

Some Lighter Issues!

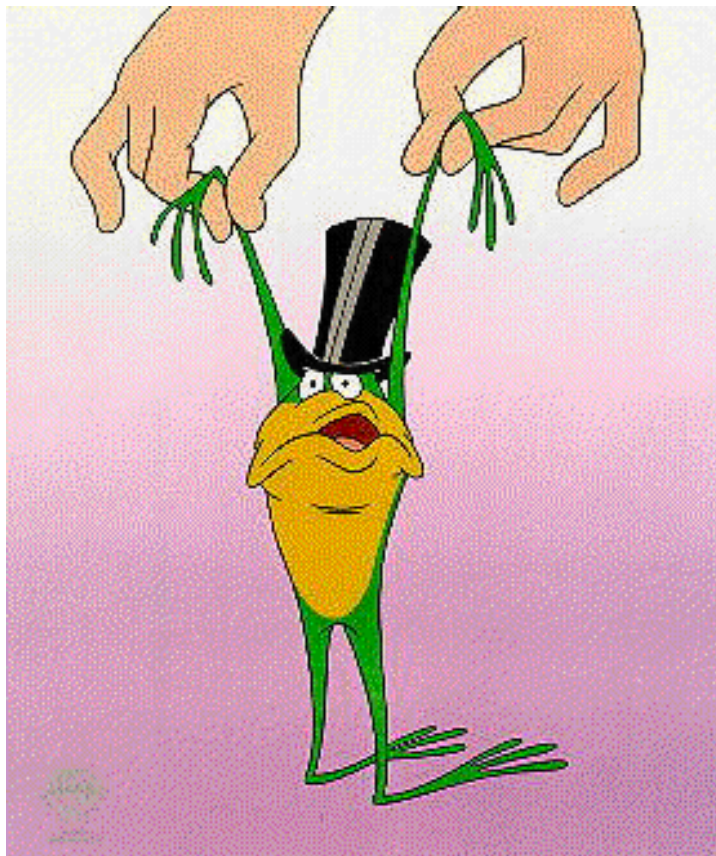


- ✓ Did You Change Your Hair?
- ✓ Did You Move The Couch?



Did you gain or lose some weight while he was deployed?

Reunion Stress



Sometimes the
Stress is Hard
to Handle

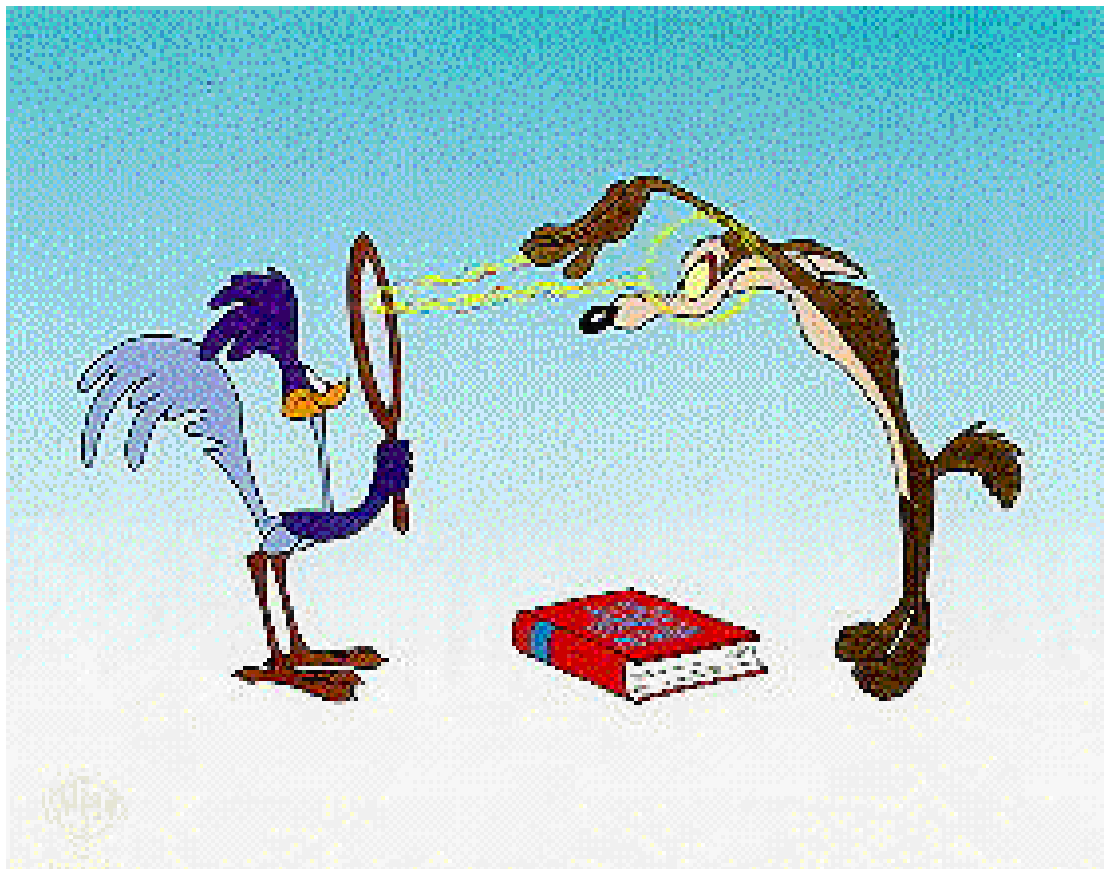
REUNION STRESS

- ✓ Did my spouse miss me?
- ✓ Was my spouse faithful?
- ✓ How will the children react?
- ✓ Did I handle things the right way?
- ✓ Did I handle the money correctly?
- ✓ How will the children react?
- ✓ Will I be able to keep new friends?

REUNION STRESS HINTS

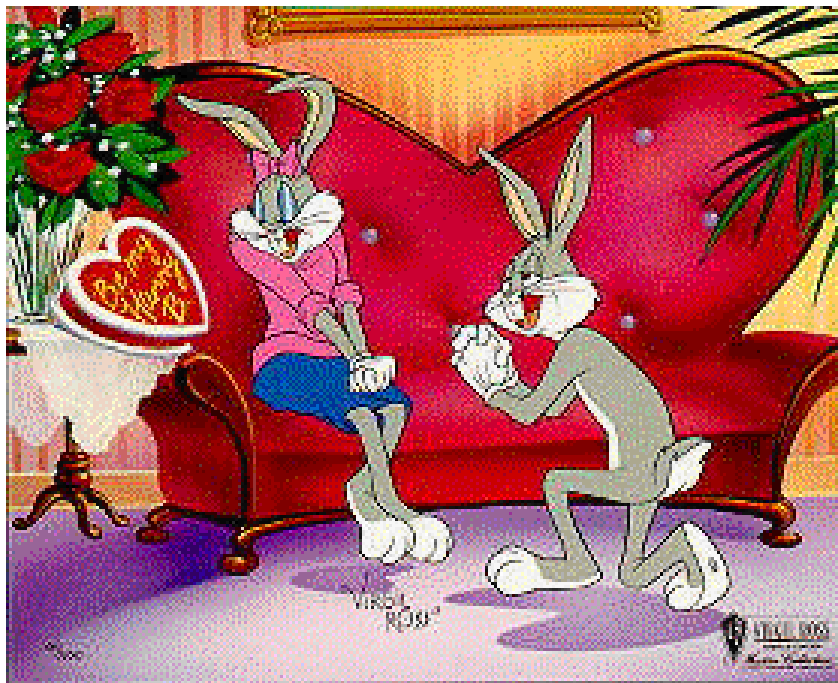
- ✓ Accept that Things will be different
- ✓ Take time to get reacquainted
- ✓ Take time to readjust to your husband
- ✓ Forget fantasies, reality will be quite different
- ✓ Intimate relations may be awkward at first
- ✓ Listen to each other (Two ears-one mouth)

Some Bigger Issues!



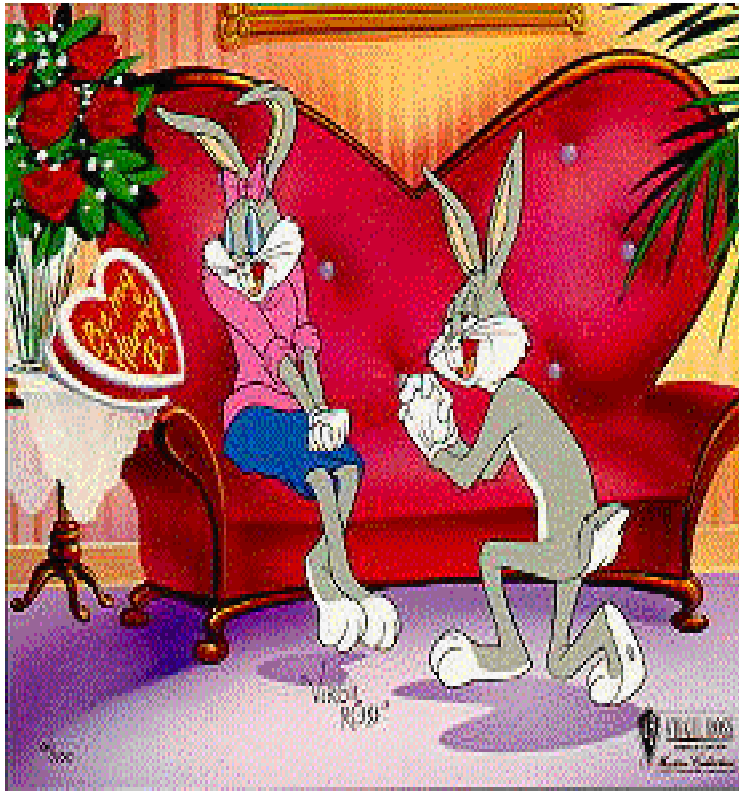
Who's In Control?

Reunion Briefing



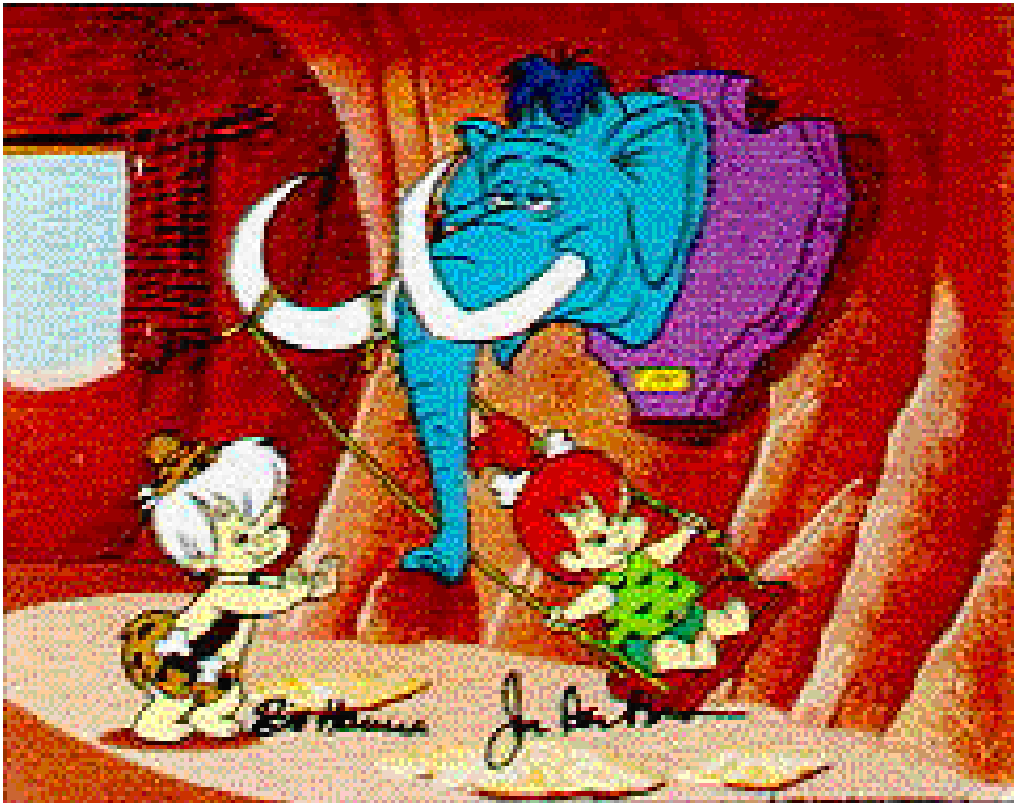
There will be a
honeymoon
period for
awhile!

What's Been Happening With You?



You've Been
Carrying the Load
for Quite Awhile

Children's Issues



How Will
The Kids
React?

Children's Issues

- ✓ Returning parents should get reacquainted with the children slowly
- ✓ Children are resilient (They'll get through it alright)

KIDS WONDER TOO

- ✓ Will I get punished because I wasn't nice sometimes?
- ✓ Will the rules change at home?
- ✓ How long will dad stay this time?

**Do not neglect your children
when you get home!**

CHILDREN

- ✓ Long Absences Place an Emotional Strain on Children
- ✓ Expect Some Negative Feelings and Reactions
- ✓ Children's Readjustment Period is 4-6 Weeks
- ✓ Avoid Discipline Extremes
- ✓ Involve Children in the Reunion Celebration
- ✓ Find Ways To Express Your Love

SERVICEMEMBERS MAY WONDER

- ✓ Will my family still need me?
- ✓ Will the kids remember me?
- ✓ How did things go while I was away?
- ✓ Will they be happy to see me?

EXPECT THE FOLLOWING

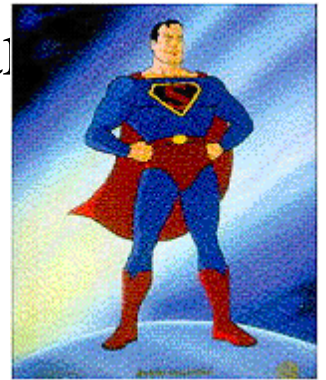
- ✓ You've Changed
- ✓ Your Family Has Changed
 - ✕ New Rules
 - ✕ New Roles-Independence
- ✓ Mixed Feeling About Reunion

HOME COMING TIPS

- ✓ Don't Disturb a Family Set-Up
- ✓ Take it easy on the Kids
- ✓ Don't Try to Immediately Alter Financial Affairs
- ✓ Don't Pack the Kids Off Right Away
- ✓ Watch the Urge to Splurge

HOME COMING TIPS

- ✓ Communicate-Listen More
- ✓ Approach Each Other As Equals
- ✓ Find Out New Skills Learned
- ✓ Be patient/Flexible
- ✓ Arrange for Quiet Times
- ✓ Stay Positive
- ✓ Don't Expect Old Problems to Have Gone Away
- ✓ Re-adjust-Reunite-Renegotiate
- ✓ It may be a few months before you are back to normal



RE-ESTABLISHING INTIMACY

- ✓ Establish an Intimacy
Plan/Courtship Atmosphere
- ✓ Communicate Your love
- ✓ Allow Each Other Space
- ✓ Expect to Feel Strange Together
at First
- ✓ Make the Most of the
Opportunity



Don't Try to be Everything!

NEW FATHERS

- ✓ Coming Home to a New Family
- ✓ Baby's Needs Come First
- ✓ Take an Active Role in Caring
- ✓ You May Feel Jealousy
- ✓ Help Other Children Adjust



ALCOHOL and DRUGS

- ✓ Best Policy-Don't Use
- ✓ Go Easy with Alcohol
- ✓ Don't Try to Make Up for Lost Time
- ✓ Abuse Always Leads to Trouble
- ✓ Help Out Each Other



**What Will Give You
The Most Problems?**

GOSSIP

!

SUCCESSFUL REUNION

- ✓ Sensitivity to each family member is critical in meetings your needs and feelings.
- ✓ Your faith will be a great indicator and contributor to your transition.

QUESTIONS?

- ✓ What do I hope has not changed.
- ✓ What do I know has changed and will be different?
- ✓ What am I worried about most as we get back together again?
- ✓ How will our lives be different because of this deployment.

SOME EXPECTATIONS

- ✓ Expect the love of your family to be strong as it was before the seperation.
- ✓ Expect excitement and celebration, even overwhelming joy, when he arrives.
- ✓ Expect married couples to want romantic time alone. Try to take leave time both with the children and just as a couple, if possible.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE SPOUSE

- ✓ Expect to have mixed feelings before your husband gets home.
- ✓ Expect the unexpected?
- ✓ Sexual intimacy may seem awkward at first. Think of your sexual reunion as a honey moon and be sensitive to your husband.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- ✓ Faithfulness
- ✓ Commitment
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Openness
- ✓ Covenant
- ✓ Boundaries